

MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Conservation Working Group
Meeting Minutes
October 21, 1997

Conservation Working Group (CWG) members in attendance were: Rachel Saunders, Chair (Center for Marine Conservation); Jack Wickham (Sierra Club-Ventana Chapter); David Iverson (Save Our Shores); Vicki Nichols (Save Our Shores); Ellen Farout-Daniels (Friends of the Sea Otter); Daphne White (Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History); Donna Meyers (Coastal Watershed Council); and Joanne Flanders and Aaron King (Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary).

Guests in attendance were: Patrick Cotter (MBNMS).

I. CWG Administration

A. The September 16, 1997 meeting minutes were approved as presented. Jack Wickham commented on the written Manager's report, suggesting that the last paragraph on page one be changed from "SRD is working closely with" to "SRD is meeting with". Jack also suggested that a section on noise be added to the report.

B. General Announcements:

- The next CWG meeting is scheduled for November 18, 1997 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Moss Landing Harbor District Office;
- Assemblyman Keeley will be holding an Interim Hearing of the Budget Subcommittee on Resources in Santa Cruz on October 29, 1997; Vicki and Ellen Farout-Daniels will be commenting at this hearing on the adequacies of budgets and initiatives; Daphne White suggested that the League of Women Voters may make an official statement during the allotted public presentation time;
- Assemblyman Machado will also be holding a Fisheries Subcommittee Hearing in Monterey on October 29, 1997. Rachel Saunders will be attending. Burr Heneman (under contract with CMC) will be speaking on behalf of the Center for Marine Conservation;
- Other important dates were noted:

Oct. 30 - VTS Workshop in Alameda

Oct. 30 - LFS Meeting at NPS

Nov. 1 - ATOC/MMRP Workshop at UCSC

- Daphne White agreed speak on the "Year of the Ocean" activities at the next meeting. She will coordinate with Liz Love.

II. MBNMS Office Report

Joanne Flanders gave the MBNMS office report. See Attachment A. The following items were not included in the written report:

- CWG participants expressed appreciation for Scott Kathey's Letter to the Editor on John Denver's plane crash.
- Discussion ensued surrounding the separation of SRD into two divisions under OCRM; Reserves and Sanctuaries. Concern was raised that there would be no more site Liaisons. Joanne stated that there would be "Management by Function" instead of by geographic location. Concern was raised by the CWG that SRD resolve organizational issues soon so that they can get on with the business of managing resources. They also expressed concern that the local Sanctuary office get proper support from headquarters.
- Patrick Cotter gave a brief presentation on Moss Landing Harbor dredging. Rachel and Ellen had many questions on the techniques used to sample the sediments, i.e., how do they avoid contamination of the samples between levels in the sediments. Vicki Nichols asked where specific dredged material disposal sites were. Patrick showed on a aerial photograph of Moss Landing where the designated disposal sites are in the ML area, and how the area's natural actions, such as currents, would deal with the dredge material dumped there.
- Some questions were raised on how much influence SRD would have on the upcoming SAC selections. Joanne stated that she would be forwarding the SAC's recommendations with her comments to headquarters for final approval.
- There was also some discussion on LFS and the different phases of the project. Vicki Nichols requested Andrew DeVogelaere provide CWG members with notes from the LFS meeting he will be attending on October 30, since many CWG members will be attending a Vessel Traffic meeting the same day.
- Jack Wickham suggested that the Bibliography on Man-Made Noise produced by the MBNMS was redundant due to bibliographies in existing publications. Suggested that the next step should be in filling in some of the gaps in information. Rachel suggested that Jack write a letter to the SAC Chair, since they will be discussing it at their next SAC meeting. Jack suggested that the timeframe for us to get to this point has been too long.
- Vicki N. expressed concern that the WQPP Citizen's Guide wasn't reviewed by "citizens" prior to being sent to the printer. The Chair requested that WQPP staff give a presentation on the guide at a future CWG meeting.
- At the request of the SAC chair, Joanne contacted the OCNMS Manager to gather background information on the Makah Tribe's request to harvest gray whales. The OCNMS SAC has several Indian tribes represented, including the Makah. The Makah Tribe briefed the OCNMS SAC on their proposed harvesting request, which is based on treaty whaling rights that date back to the 1800s. The SAC is not questioning the tribe's treaty rights. The Makah will present their request at the upcoming IWC meeting in Monaco. Within NOAA, the issue is being handled by Dr. Baker's office.

III. North Coast Aquaculture/Abalone Farms - Patrick Cotter and David Iverson

Dave Iverson opened a discussion on the planned abalone farm expansion project in Pillar Point Harbor. Fishermen have been coming to him with concerns on this. Patrick Cotter stated that the monitoring required by the RWQCB's NPDES permits for the abalone farm applicants has not yet been completed. Concerns include the dissolved oxygen content in the water, the

disposition of waste products, impacts on benthic invertebrates, fish and birds, and contamination of farm and wild abalone by a parasitic sabellid worm found on California abalone brought from abalone from Southern Africa. See Attachment B (prepared by local opponents of the project).

Questions rose on who the potential aquaculturalists were. Patrick said there were at least five potential applicants for licenses to put in abalone operations in Pillar Point Harbor (US Abalone, Princeton Abalone, Blue Pacific, Deeper Blue Enterprise, Pearl Abalone Company and Pacific Offshore). Some had submitted applications to the California Coastal Commission, some had not.

Discussion ensued on kelp harvesting in leased beds and unleased beds. Concerns raised over the amount of kelp necessary to maintain the number of abalone projected for this site.

RWQCB and CCC are the lead agencies on permits for the proposed aquaculture projects. Questions need to be asked before further action is taken. A general feeling of the CWG was that a push for a full EIR be conducted on this project before it goes any further. Patrick emphasized that the MBNMS was trying to work through the other agencies who have more of a lead authority.

Status of permit requests: No movement at RWQCB.

Ellen F.D. suggested that the agencies strive to have this be a model process since the aquaculturalists will probably want to move on to other harbors.

Patrick was asked to keep the CWG informed of the process and progress on this issue.

IV. Citizen Monitoring Programs - Donna Meyers

Donna Meyers gave a presentation on the Coastal Watershed Council's Clean Stream Program. Donna indicated they were doing work on three streams in Santa Cruz, three in San Mateo, and one in Monterey County. They have trained volunteers who are checking fifty miles of creeks every week. See Attachment C. Rachel asked how the volunteers were organized. Donna described their volunteer demographics. Donna also reported that CWC and CMC have developed a Citizen Monitoring Network Steering Committee to organize volunteer programs the region. This would parallel the WQPP's efforts to organize the regional agencies. The idea is to ensure that volunteer data is credible and regional water quality monitoring finds a home in the regulatory structure.

Rachel stated that the RWQCB had just recently hired someone to oversee regional monitoring efforts, and to assist in integrating volunteer monitoring efforts. Vicki suggested that Donna make contact with SOS's new volunteer coordinator in San Mateo.

V. Issue/Program Updates

- Donna gave an update on the planning for the MBNMS Symposium on March 7, 1998, at the Coconut Grove in Santa Cruz. Speakers are still being lined up for the various sessions. Donna also described a pilot project

done by the CWC in cooperation with the City of Monterey to test storm drain discharge in the city. The idea is to help the city pinpoint trouble areas and better educate businesses to reduce dumping into storm drains. The overall topic will be "Cumulative Impacts on the Sanctuary and its Resources." A Conservation Resource Fair is an idea being floated as something where the various Conservation groups could have hands-on demonstrations of their activities. Suggested topics at the research symposium in the afternoon: Introduced Species, Marine Reserves, and Live Fish Fisheries. The topics for the morning opening session include coastal development, fisheries, vessel traffic, and ecotourism. There would then be the Ricketts Memorial Lecture, and then the party. Suggestions requested for speakers at the Symposium.

- At January's Meeting the CWG will nominate someone for the Conservation Award.
- Vicki gave an update on the Sea Lion Salmon issue. She indicated that a transcript of the August workshop would be ready in December and that a smaller workshop would happen this coming winter.
- Vicki and Rachel gave a brief report on the latest Vessel Traffic Workshop.
- Daphne gave a short presentation on access to the internet at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron King

ENC.
MBNMS Manager's Report
Letters to Commissioners
The Clean Streams Program

CWG Meeting Minutes - October 21, 1997 FINAL